

NFAC 1867-79

12 April 1979

Memorandum for Dr. Bowie

Subject: Senior Review Panel Comments on Memorandum, "Results of Brazil Conference and Further Research Plans" (NFAC 1787-79)

1. [ ] sent us a copy of the subject memorandum yesterday and asked us to send you our reactions. 25X1

2. We endorse the importance of the Brazil estimate and this project to associate nongovernment experts in its preparation. Although the results are thin to date, we think both the NIE and the series of seminars on Brazil, which you suggested some five months ago, should be pressed. We would hope that a wider range of consultants and scholars can be convened in the future seminars the drafters plan.

3. On the basis of the results the memorandum reports, we wonder whether this should be the only general seminar envisioned and whether the work is now ready to turn to "specific needs" (para. 8). A prototype or preliminary concept paper might clarify the question. In any event, a case for greater rigor--as well as greater urgency--could be made. For examples:

a. The paper mentions (para. 2) that the purpose of the seminar was to identify factors of "lasting and overriding importance in Brazilian national life" but no indication is given of what emerged.

b. The question of an alternative development model is interesting, but its description as an "inward looking, autarchic strategy" (para. 4) seems extreme unless one presupposes socio-political

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revolution. In the absence of this, changes in international versus national orientation are apt to be gradual and relatively marginal, especially in countries like Brazil where the ruling elites favor a pragmatic approach.

c. We do not understand why Brazil is not regarded as already having achieved "foreign policy independence" (para. 7) or, for that matter, "major nation status" (para. 7) unless some special definitions are intended.

d. The research plan does not indicate the general schedule or target dates contemplated--or specify what time frame the NIE itself will have: three years, five, how far ahead the state of our information will support a reasonable projection of visible trends and alternatives.

4. But we conclude, and emphasize, that the project should be pursued and that a potentially promising beginning in a matter of importance has been made.



  
William Leonhart

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